

# the condition of education 2001



## INDICATOR 4

### Parental Education, by Race/Ethnicity

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2001*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2001*, visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001072>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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## NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

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U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

# Elementary/Secondary Education

## Parental Education, by Race/Ethnicity

*The gap in the percentages of white and black children whose parents have at least a high school education has narrowed over the past 25 years.*

Parents' educational attainment is related to student achievement and other dimensions of educational participation and outcomes (Grissmer et al. 1994). In 1999, a higher percentage of white children than black and Hispanic children ages 6–18 had parents who attained at least a high school education. The same is true for the percentage who attained at least a bachelor's degree.

Between 1974 and 1999, the percentage of children ages 6–18 whose parents had at least a high school education increased among all racial/ethnic groups. However, the rates of increase differed by racial/ethnic groups. While fewer black children ages 6–18 had parents who completed at least a high school education compared with their white peers, the attainment gap between the percentage of white and black children whose parents attained this level of education narrowed considerably between 1974 and 1999. This large reduction in the gap was due to a large increase in the percentage of black children with

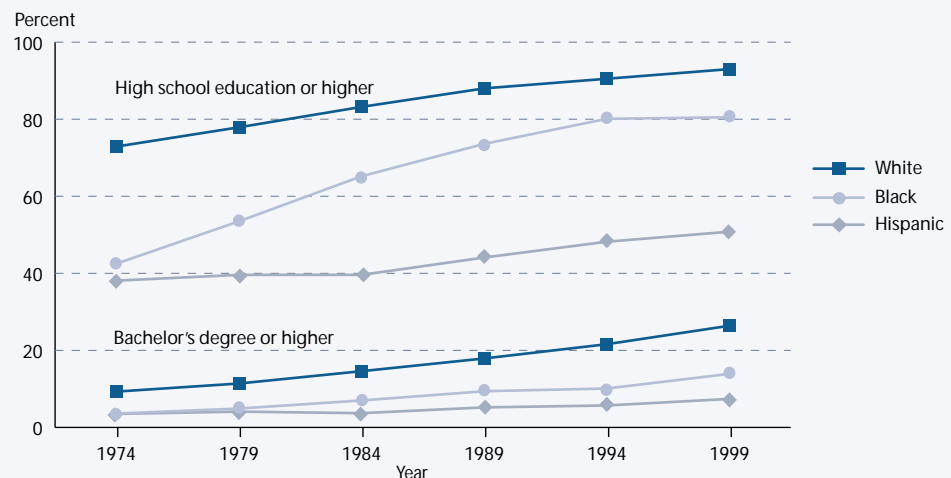
parents who attained at least a high school education compared with their white peers. In contrast, the gap between the percentages of white and Hispanic children whose mothers attained at least a high school education did not change, while the gap between the percentages of white and Hispanic children whose fathers attained this level of education increased (see supplemental table 4-1).

Patterns in the bachelor's degree attainment of parents are different from those in high school attainment. Although more black and Hispanic 6- to 18-year-olds had mothers who attained at least a bachelor's degree in 1999 than in 1974, the gap in the percentages of white and black and white and Hispanic 6- to 18-year-olds whose parents had at least a bachelor's degree has increased in the past 25 years, with the exception of the gap between the fathers of black and white children, which has not changed (see supplemental table 4-1).

NOTE: The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions used to obtain educational attainment were changed in 1992. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. Information on parents' educational attainment is available only for those parents who live in the same household with their child.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. March Current Population Surveys, various years.

**PARENTAL EDUCATION: Percentage of 6- to 18-year-olds with mothers who completed at least high school or a bachelor's degree or more: 1974–99**



FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
Supplemental Notes 1, 2  
Supplemental Table 4-1  
Grissmer et al. 1994

## Parental Education, by Race/Ethnicity

**Table 4-1** Percentage distribution of 6- to 18-year-olds according to parents' highest education level, by child's race/ethnicity: 1974–99

Parents' highest education level and child's race/ethnicity	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999
<b>White</b>						
Mother's highest education level	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than high school	27.1	22.1	16.8	12.0	9.5	6.9
High school diploma or equivalent	51.4	50.4	50.3	48.8	37.9	35.2
Some college, including vocational/technical	12.2	16.1	18.3	21.3	31.0	31.4
Bachelor's degree or higher	9.3	11.4	14.6	17.9	21.6	26.4
Father's highest education level	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than high school	28.6	22.4	16.2	12.2	9.1	8.1
High school diploma or equivalent	38.3	38.7	39.0	38.4	32.2	31.5
Some college, including vocational/technical	13.2	15.5	18.3	20.1	27.4	26.8
Bachelor's degree or higher	19.9	23.4	26.5	29.3	31.3	33.6
<b>Black</b>						
Mother's highest education level	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than high school	57.6	46.4	34.8	26.3	20.0	19.6
High school diploma or equivalent	32.1	36.1	42.6	44.4	40.0	37.1
Some college, including vocational/technical	6.8	12.5	15.6	19.8	30.0	29.5
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.6	4.9	7.0	9.4	10.1	13.9
Father's highest education level	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than high school	61.3	44.3	33.1	25.4	18.2	14.6
High school diploma or equivalent	27.1	35.7	38.4	40.4	42.2	39.3
Some college, including vocational/technical	7.6	12.7	16.3	20.6	23.5	29.7
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.0	7.3	12.2	13.7	16.1	16.5
<b>Hispanic</b>						
Mother's highest education level	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than high school	61.8	60.4	60.5	55.8	51.8	49.2
High school diploma or equivalent	28.9	28.3	28.2	28.7	26.9	25.2
Some college, including vocational/technical	5.7	7.2	7.7	10.2	15.6	18.2
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.5	4.1	3.7	5.2	5.7	7.4
Father's highest education level	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than high school	58.3	57.2	56.3	51.6	51.1	48.9
High school diploma or equivalent	24.9	25.0	25.0	27.2	23.2	26.2
Some college, including vocational/technical	8.4	9.5	10.5	13.4	17.5	14.7
Bachelor's degree or higher	8.4	8.3	8.2	7.7	8.3	10.1

NOTE: Information on parents' highest education level is available only for those parents who live in the same household with their child. The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions used to obtain educational attainment were changed in 1994 and weights were adjusted; see *Supplemental Note 2* for more information. Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. See *Supplemental Note 1* for information on the racial/ethnic categories.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. March Current Population Surveys, various years.

## Parental Education, by Race/Ethnicity

**Table S4** Standard errors for the percentage of 6- to 18-year-olds with mothers who completed at least high school or a bachelor's degree or more: 1974–99

Parents' highest education level and child's race/ethnicity	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999
<b>White</b>						
High school education or higher	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6
<b>Black</b>						
High school education or higher	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.6	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.1
<b>Hispanic</b>						
High school education or higher	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.5	1.7
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.0	1.2	0.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. March Current Population Surveys, various years.

## Parental Education, by Race/Ethnicity

**Table S4-1** Standard errors for the percentage distribution of 6- to 18-year-olds according to parents' highest education level, by child's race/ethnicity: 1974–99

Parents' highest education level and child's race/ethnicity	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999
<b>White</b>						
Mother's highest education level	–	–	–	–	–	–
Less than high school	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
High school diploma or equivalent	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.6
Some college, including vocational/technical	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6
Father's highest education level	–	–	–	–	–	–
Less than high school	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4
High school diploma or equivalent	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.6
Some college, including vocational/technical	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
<b>Black</b>						
Mother's highest education level	–	–	–	–	–	–
Less than high school	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.3
High school diploma or equivalent	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.6
Some college, including vocational/technical	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.7	1.5
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.6	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.1
Father's highest education level	–	–	–	–	–	–
Less than high school	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.7
High school diploma or equivalent	1.7	2.0	2.2	2.5	2.6	1.9
Some college, including vocational/technical	1.0	1.4	1.7	2.0	2.3	1.8
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.7	2.0	1.5
<b>Hispanic</b>						
Mother's highest education level	–	–	–	–	–	–
Less than high school	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.5	1.7
High school diploma or equivalent	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.0	2.2	1.5
Some college, including vocational/technical	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.8	1.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.0	1.2	0.9
Father's highest education level	–	–	–	–	–	–
Less than high school	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.6	2.9	1.9
High school diploma or equivalent	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.3	2.5	1.4
Some college, including vocational/technical	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.8	2.2	1.2
Bachelor's degree or higher	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.0

— Not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. March Current Population Surveys, various years.